



PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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DECEMBER RED MEAT PRODUCTION

WEST VIRGINIA -- Commercial red meat production during December 2005 totaled 700,000 pounds. This was 8 percent below December 2004 production and 20 percent below the November 2005 production. Commercial red meat production is the carcass weight after slaughter including beef, veal, pork, and lamb and mutton. Individual commodity production is total live weight of commercial slaughter.

Commercial cattle slaughter totaled 1.2 million pounds live weight, up 2 percent from December 2004. Cattle slaughter totaled 1,200 head, the same as the previous year. The average live weight, at 1,000 pounds, was up 40 pounds from a year ago.

Commercial calf slaughter was not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.

Commercial hog slaughter totaled 169,000 pounds live weight, down 8 percent from last year. Hog slaughter totaled 700 head, the same as the previous year. The average live weight, at 259 pounds, was down 9 pounds from the previous year.

Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter was not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.

UNITED STATES -- Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 3.95 billion pounds in December, up 1 percent from the 3.93 billion pounds produced in December 2004.

Beef production, at 2.06 billion pounds, was 1 percent above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.67 million head, down 1 percent from December 2004. The average live weight was up 13 pounds from the previous year, at 1,281 pounds.

Veal production totaled 13.5 million pounds, 9 percent below December a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 60,100 head, down 19 percent from December 2004. The average live weight was 36 pounds above last year, at 370 pounds.

Pork production totaled 1.87 billion pounds, up slightly from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 9.23 million head, slightly below December 2004. The average live weight was 2 pounds above the previous year, at 272 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 16.5 million pounds, was down 3 percent from December 2004. Sheep slaughter totaled 231,000 head, 5 percent below last year. The average live weight was 143 pounds, up 3 pounds from December a year ago.

January to December 2005 commercial red meat production was 45.7 billion pounds, up 1 percent from 2004. Accumulated beef production was up 1 percent from last year, veal was down 7 percent, pork was up 1 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 4 percent.

December 2004 contained 23 weekdays (including two holidays) and 4 Saturdays.

December 2005 contained 22 weekdays (including one holiday) and 5 Saturdays.

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